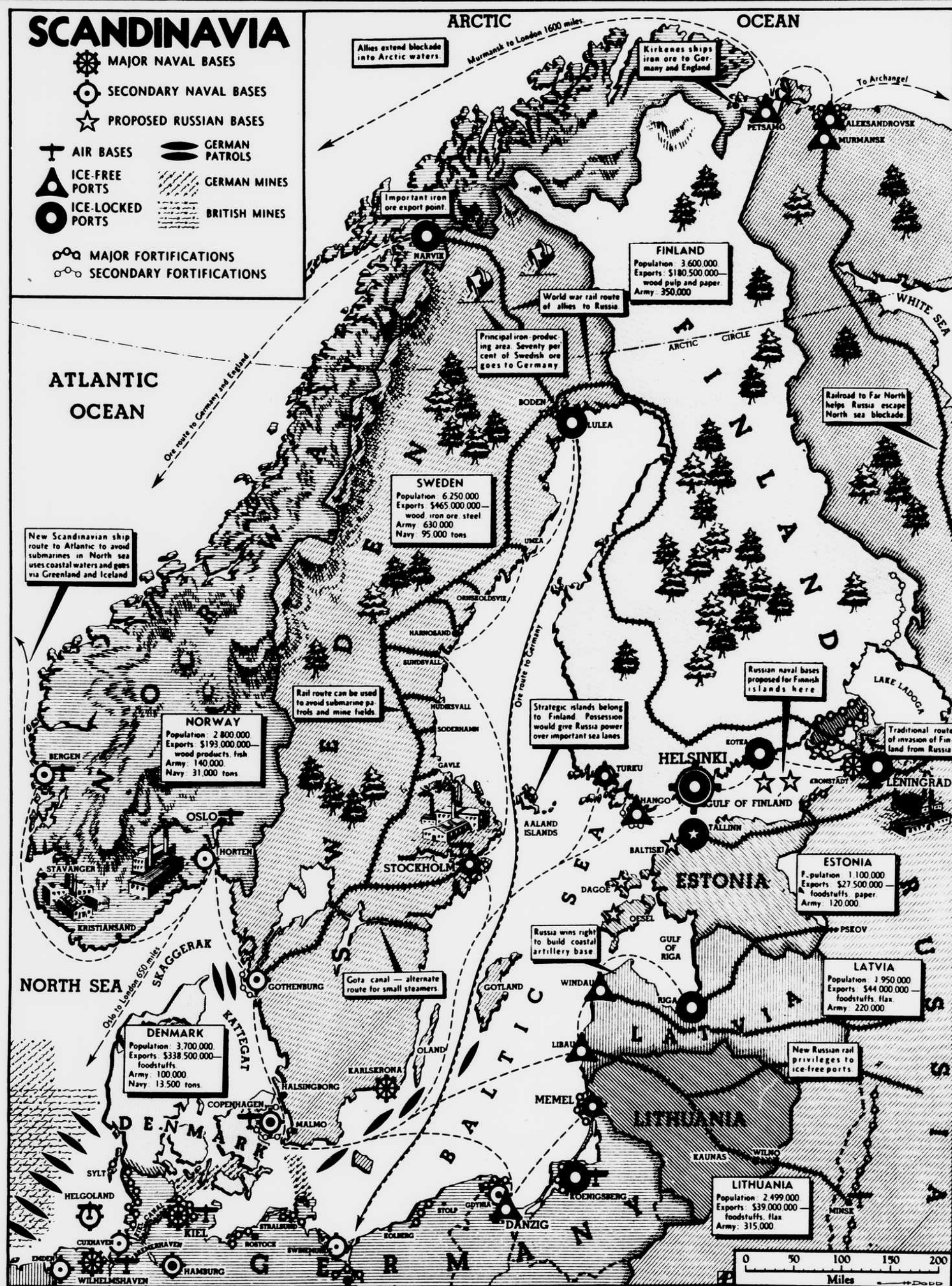


8. RED SHADOW CREEPS WEST ALONG THE BALTIC



AS TWO little neutrals in the west feared they might become a battleground, three little neutrals in the east were put on something of a spot. Big neutral Russia had just split up Poland with Germany. Now it wanted ice-free ports along the Baltic, and bases controlling sea lanes.

So it pressed "mutual aid" pacts on Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and after thinking over the situation, these nations yielded. Finland's turn came next.

Those developments put three more neutrals on a spot—traditionally peaceful Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. The western war had brought them trouble aplenty. Their trade lines run

through belligerent waters, as the map shows, and their best customers are Germany and Britain. Early in the war, they had decided to continue their trade—a decision that cost them more than 100 ships in six months.

Now the war in the east put them between two fires. Where would the westward-moving Bear step next? If they tried to help themselves by helping Finland, might not Russia's good friend Germany strike north to protect her iron supplies?

They pondered these questions during the war's sixth month and decided once again to remain neutral. But developments indicated they would have a tough job sticking to that decision.